

It is respectfully submitted that the prior art structures do not operate on this basis.

Claim 2 in the application has been amended to further define the structure and in particular, the protuberances provided on the corners of the coupling part which bear against the two bearing surfaces of the corresponding panel shaped element 22. It is noted that the tie rods which draw these components into the abutting relationship maintain the end sides of the panel-shaped elements against these protuberances. With this relationship the alignment of the panel-shaped elements with the coupling part is achieved.

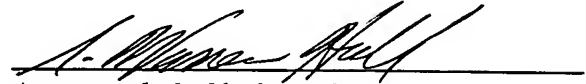
The Examiner has previously indicated that dependent claim 2 as originally presented is patentable over the art. Claim 1 as now amended to include some of the limitations of former dependent claim 2 also distinguishes over the prior art which fails to teach the particular combination.

The primary reference GB 1 187 039 discloses a knock down form that allows convenient site assembly. In contrast to the present invention, the UK reference requires a pair spaced standards each having at least one hole formed therein oppositely one to the other and a fitting mounted in each of the holes. Spacer members are provided between the standards and the tie rod is positioned in a groove in the lower surface of the spacer member.

As the Examiner can appreciate, this primary reference requires opposed standards in a series of spacers as opposed to the claimed furniture system having first and second rectangular shaped elements positioned at an angle with respect to one another and connected by means of a coupling part which separates the panel-shaped elements with this coupling part engaging the ends of the panel elements. As outlined in the present application, this particular arrangement allows the user to reconfigure the furniture system in a number of different ways and it also allows for convenient expansion. Consistency is provided by means of the sizing of the first and second rectangular shaped elements.

In view of the amendments made to claim 1, it is believed the remaining dependent claims fully distinguish over the cited prior art reference.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "S. Warren Hall", is written over a horizontal line.

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WH/jc
Enclosure